

Anthills of the savana essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Sam is the president; Chris is the minister of information, while Seem is the editor Of the national gazette. As the Story unfolds, it is seen that the president is consumed by his pursuit for absolute power; he becomes a dictator and kills his friend Seem for standing in his way, and still strives to complete his blood thirsty mission by searching for Chris, who being aware of danger runs for his life. Cam's dictatorship is cut short by a counter coup, which sends him to his early demise. Chris who lives to see the end of Cam's dictatorship also dies, but with a smile of victory.

Achebe addresses the evil associated with power (Sam, when confronted with being the head of state was scared to the bone but after resuming position he decides to make his el permanent and clears anyone who seems to stand in his way). The story of Anthills of the Savannah tries to offer a succession of a corrupt history of Nigeria as a whole. At the end of the novel Cam's regime of dictatorship is overthrown by a new regime. Achebe writes with a straightforward narrative style, switching viewpoints, and always using concrete details and powerful characters to move the story.

Point of view signifies the way in which the author tells his or her story. In order words point of view reveals the position from which the events are presented by the author and observed by the deader. It is a lens through which the reader views the story. Achebe uses the third person omniscient point of view together with the first person point of view.

The omniscient narrator when describing events or stories surrounding some of the characters allows for these characters to tell their own stories. In most instances, both views are expressed in a single paragraph. These birds she

thought, did not just arrive here this morning. Here, quite clearly, is where they have always slept.

Why have I not noticed them before? The emphasis is on 'she' and 'mine'. The omniscient narrator after this paragraph aerates another paragraph and leaves the rest for Beatrice. The two views constantly mix up. In narrating events which are closely linked with the characters, the first person is employed rather than the third.

Seem, Beatrice and Chris all tell their Story with their own voice. Achebe uses a mixture Of standard language, the Nigerian pidgin and the Gobo language in his narration.

The range of expression in the narrative varies from the Standard English used by the literate characters like Chris, Skimmer Beatrice, and other literate characters in the story, while pidgin is used for semi-literate harassers like; Leeway, Barroom, Ghats, and other semi-literates in the story. Words in Gobo are infused into the novel like the way English words are used. The use of the Standard English and pidgin by different characters show the social status of these characters.

At other times, it is used to show the relationship between the speakers.

This feature is best seen when Kong a very enlightened man who at least knows his English says 'fearful' instead of beautiful because he is in the presence of His Excellency. The author chooses this word to lower his caste as such making the president feel period -flattery. After the flattery, Kong begins to feel at ease and this is seen in the lines when he bursts out his

feelings towards the Baobabs who were once against the President and now dare to come ask him for help and pledge their allegiance. In his excitement he says ‘ carry their nonsense come your house’.

This sentence is in the pidgin and likely to be used in informal situations among people who can speak Standard English. The language of the illiterate and literates is written in a way to reflect who they are. Leeway is semi-literate and as such communicates in the pidgin Instead of ‘ proper English’. In her argument with Seem, she says: ‘ I beg you, no make me vex.

.. Imagine! Him! But woman done chop sand for this world-a... Imagine! But an we De campus; an we own fault.

If no UK bring my stupid anarchy come dump for your bedroom you for De kick me about like I be football? I no blame you. At all! To which Seem replies in Standard English; ‘ I don’t know what you are talking about’. She uses Pidgin English throughout the story. Achebe makes this so just to depict the differences which exist among people and how they interrelate. When Seem tries to make her understand, he stoops o her level and speaks to her in the language she understands. He says to her ‘ I no want make you join all the loose women for Bass who no De sleep for house’.

This can also be read as a sort of familiarity. When Seem goes down to meet the taxi driver who is supposed to take Leeway home, he speaks ‘ correct English’ with him to maintain a level of formality.

After he has cornered the taxi driver into thinking that he knows the clause pertaining to the lack of interior light (which he just makes up), he speaks

the pidgin as a form of reassuring him that, you take my woman home safely and I will not eve cause to come after since I know the laws more than you do. He seals their mutual understanding with ‘ a twenty kobo tip’.

Each character is made to use language or diction which suits his or her level of education. Achebe’s prose is narrated using dialogues, in almost every part of it.

The use of dialogue helps bring events to play, thereby making the actions taking place to be vehemently felt by the reader. It introduces a kind of dramatic feature to the prose, which enables the reader to share in the humor as expressed by characters, the act of love, the quarrels that ensured between characters, ND the happiness as felt and expressed by characters in the story. Dialogue is used in chapter one to show the stern argument between the president and the minister of information: ‘ You’re wasting everybody’s time, Mr. Commissioner for information.

I will not go to Bacon. Finish! Sabina! Any other business? ‘ ‘ As Your Excellency wishes. But ‘ But me no buts, Mr. Rook! The matter is closed I said..

The quarrel between Seem and his girlfriend Leeway is narrated in a dialogue form, and through this the reader is able to see the love which still exist amidst they little squabble ‘ Imagine To put a girl for taxi at midnight to go and jam with arm robbers in the road. ‘ ‘ You know very well, Leeway, that there are no more armed robbers in Bass. ‘ The woman deem massacre for Motor Park last week an you kill. ‘ Nobody will kill you, Leeway’ ‘ Nobody will kill you Leeway. Why you no drive me home yourself if say you know arm

robbers done finish for Bass. Make you kiddos' Dialogue is the very mechanism used by Achebe to bring the story to life.

In the description of events, Achebe employs the use of words which create vivid pictures in the imagination of the reader. An instance can be seen in the description of the actions of the Honorable Commissioner for Education; 'as soon as he had knifed peril in the air he had begun to disappear into his hole, as some animals and insects do, backwards'.

The commissioner's next action creates this same effect when he 'gathered his papers together' and 'dragging them into his hole suddenly went rigid'. Achebe compares the cabinet members' act of finally being able to talk in the tense environment as a 'crawl' out of their 'holes', a reference to their first act of crawling back into their holes. These words bring to mind a crab or even a rat which scampers to its hole at the sight of danger and finally emerges when the danger is no more. Also, the ascription of the struggle between Seem and the taxi driver creates the image of a race.

He contented-driver conceded victory with a heavy curse, pulled back and returned again to second place behind the victor thanks to the cooperation of the bronze medalist who halted for him to resume his original position'. The use of the words 'bronze medalist suggests there are gold and silver medalist. Seem is the gold medalist because he is in the lead, the taxi driver is the silver medalist because he is in second position and the other driver takes the bronze medal. The very striking imagery is that of 'the green bottles'.

This is both an imagery and an allusion to a children's' rhyme.

It is about ten green bottles which accidentally fall off one after the other until finally there is none left on the wall. Chris describes himself, Seem and Sam as the green bottles standing on the wall. Once a bottle falls it breaks as such whenever one of the big three falls, so does a green bottle. In the rhyme however, the bottles fall accidentally but in the novel, 'the bottles' fall because they are pushed. The comparisons Achebe uses end up creating images as well. These can be seen in the following extracts.

L could see a smile or the Dianne of a smile from the back of his head like the faint memory of light at the edges of an eclipse' and 'Grimly oblivious of the car beside him riding with its n. Wow legs in the bush, Seem pursued the red brake-lights ahead like a randy he-goat sniffing the bottom of his mate. ' There are allusions to the Bible in the novel; 'I go to prepare a place for you, gentlemen but rest assure I will keep the most comfortable cell for myself said by professor Kong followed by Christopher Rook's response 'that is a man after my own heart'. His first statement was made by Jesus when he told his disciples that he was going head to heaven to prepare a place for them while the second refers to David whom was described by God as a man after God's heart. Also, Beatrice compares herself to Esther, in the Bible, when she shamelessly throws herself at her boyfriend at a point in time when she was a student in England to save her nation's pride. Another reference is made to Davit's coat of many colors.

Achebe in his narrative employs the idea of storytelling. Throughout Anthills of the Savannah there are references to stories, narratives, and the storyteller.

Three of the novel's main characters are writers: Seem is a writer ND newspaper editor, Beatrice writes short stories, and Chris is a former journalist who left his post as editor Of the National Gazette' to accept the position of Commissioner of Information. The elder from Bacon speaks at length about the important and lasting role of the storyteller. He argues that in his youth he would have said that the battle was most important, but now that he is older and wiser, he understands that the story is more powerful.

Achebe in this novel has also decided to locate women centrally as the main hope for the future.

He portrays them as being understanding and sensible in heir reaction to the happenings around them. Beatrice is described as independent and self sufficient. Leeway who has Seem for a boyfriend still keeps a trade and is not totally dependent on him. Achebe as a feminist uses his character Seem to put forward the true meaning of a ' woman'. You charged me with assigning to women the role Of a fire-brigade after the house has caught fire.

.. The original oppression of women was based on a crude denigration...

So prodigious is man's inventiveness... So the idea came to man to pick her up from right under his foot..

. To a nice, corner pedestal...

Neck, they said. Mother is supreme. Let us keep her in reserve until the ultimate crisis arrives..

. Then as the world crashes around men's ears, woman in her supremacy will descend and sweep the shards together. ' After all the mishaps the women, Beatrice and Leeway, are still strong. They continue their journey of life with a vision of making the best out of their life and the life of Machine. The function of child naming meant for men is done by the women.